



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

---

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
Sept. 9, 2009

For More Information, Contact:  
Dawn Mayer  
Division of Injury Prevention and Control  
North Dakota Department of Health  
Phone: 701.328.4533  
E-mail: [drmayer@nd.gov](mailto:drmayer@nd.gov)

### **Governor Hoeven Proclaims Child Passenger Safety Week** ***Data Shows Five Out of Six Car Seats Are Used Incorrectly in North Dakota***

BISMARCK, N.D. – Governor John Hoeven has proclaimed Sept. 12 through 18, 2009, as *Child Passenger Safety Week* in North Dakota to highlight the importance of using car seats correctly.

Information gathered in 2008 indicates that five out of six car seats are used incorrectly in North Dakota, according to Dawn Mayer, Child Passenger Safety Program director for the North Dakota Department of Health. As a result, the Department of Health is reminding all parents and caregivers to read and follow the instructions for proper use of their child's car seat.

Each year, car seat checkups are held throughout the state, where certified trained technicians inspect each car seat to make sure it is appropriate for the age and weight of the child and that the seat is in good condition, free from recalls and not too old. In addition, the technicians teach parents how to install car seats properly and how to secure their children safely.

The most common errors identified at the 2008 checkups include:

- Car seats were installed too loosely. The car seat should not move more than one inch side to side or front to back when grasped at the belt path.
- Children were not secured snugly in the car seat. Harness straps should lay flat on the chest and over the hips. There should be no slack, and you should not be able to pinch any webbing.
- Caregivers used the wrong harness slots, causing the harnesses to fit the child's body incorrectly. All car seats are different; follow the instructions to determine which harness slots to use.
- The harness clip was used incorrectly. The harness clip should be centered between the child's armpits.
- Car seats were installed at the wrong angle.

-- more --

---

600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0200  
Phone: 701.328.2372 Fax: 701.328.4727 E-mail: [health@nd.gov](mailto:health@nd.gov)

Visit the health department home page at [www.ndhealth.gov](http://www.ndhealth.gov).

- Caregivers were using expired car seats. Most car seats have an expiration date after six to eight years.

Free car seat checkups are offered throughout North Dakota all year long. To find out if a checkup will be offered in or near your community or to find information about choosing a car seat for your child, visit [www.ndhealth.gov/injury/](http://www.ndhealth.gov/injury/) or call the North Dakota Department of Health at 800.472.2286, press 1.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for North Dakota children after the first year of life. According to the North Dakota Department of Transportation, 75 children younger than 18 died as occupants in motor vehicles and another 3,972 were injured between 2003 and 2007. When used correctly, car safety seats, booster seats and seat belts can greatly increase the chances of surviving a motor vehicle crash.

In conjunction with Child Passenger Safety Week, billboards across North Dakota will remind caregivers to read the instructions when using car seats. For more information about Child Passenger Safety Week, visit [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)

PROCLAMATION  
**CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY WEEK**  
September 12 through 18, 2009

**WHEREAS**, Child Passenger Safety Week is an opportunity to remind parents and caregivers to use child restraints for their children and to follow the instructions about how to use the restraint correctly; and

**WHEREAS**, in North Dakota, five out of six car seats are used wrong; and

**WHEREAS**, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death and injury to North Dakota children younger than 18 years; and

**WHEREAS**, the use of car safety seats, booster seats and seat belts can greatly increase the chances of surviving a motor vehicle crash when used correctly; and

**WHEREAS**, North Dakota law requires children younger than 7 to be buckled correctly in a child restraint (car seat or booster seat) and children ages 7 through 17 to be buckled correctly in a child restraint or seat belt.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, as Governor of the State of North Dakota, I do hereby proclaim September 12-18, 2009, **CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY WEEK** in the state of North Dakota.

John Hoeven  
Governor

-- 30 --

*Please note: To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at [www.nddohpressroom.gov](http://www.nddohpressroom.gov).*

---

600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0200  
Phone: 701.328.2372      Fax: 701.328.4727      E-mail: [health@nd.gov](mailto:health@nd.gov)

*Visit the health department home page at [www.ndhealth.gov](http://www.ndhealth.gov).*